6/10/71

Dear Sylvia,

Please do not be frightened by this, but also do not dismiss it out of hand. And keep it confidential.

Yesterday I got a letter from the administrative assistant to Senator Mike Gravel, enclosing xeroxes of an anonymous letter to his administrative assistant and the envelope. While at first the AA was inclined to regard it as some kind of black humor by a friend, the more he thought about it, the more he grew concerned. Although superficially a nut letter, it is inherently a threat to two people, Senator McGovern and me.

The first thing they then did was give it to the Secret Service. They ended up dismissing it as nutty. But what left the AA unsatisfied and does the same with me is that it is too allegorical, showing signs of some knowledge of literature. The reference to Duncan is too MacBirdian (MacBirdian?) to ignore.

We had to go to DC yesterday, so I got my mail at the Post Office and was able to think of this. I spoke to the AA and I tried to reach Tom Kelley, who was out of his office most of the day.

One of the possibilities that occurred to me is Thornley. If he comes to trial and if I am called as a witness, it is possible he can by my evidence be convicted. Once I learned the true character of "security" in the Garrison office, I did not give them such thibgs as this Thornley proof. Nor have I disclosed having it to them. There are some possibly relevant files I got from an associate of Kerry's early in my investigations that I did give them and I'll ask for copies today. They were to have made them for me but didn't. It is now too early to call Ivon. Those are full of ellipsis and typing, and this is excessively elliptical. (I think KT is literally nuts anyway.)

Now there had never been any kind of contact between me and anyone in Gravel's office. Yet this writing begins, "Can Mr. Weisberg translate?" And by what a coincidence the postmark is my birthday! Two different typewriters were used.

What I'd appreciate your doing as soon as you can with all the work you have is sending me three samples of all typewriters used by or in any way connected with Thornley. I have a sample of his 1964 machine (when I saved him from trouble, the bastard). The content is of no interest, just the samples, so nothing confidential need be involved. If you do not want to identify the writers, except him, please mark them in a way you can later identify if this turns out to be something real. I do not know which of those associated with him wrote you. One copy is for me, one for the Secret Service and one for a police department with which I have long worked in connection with their extremist activities. They do have a few samples of the typing of the rightists in this State, and the letter bears a Rockville postmark. Interestingly, the name on the envelope is that of I.F.Stone, but the address a fake. No city is given in the return address. They have a file on me for my protection, including vpiceprinting of threats by phone.

I prefer to take no chances. There are other possibilities, such as the NSRP, active here (for them, that is), and the Minutemen, where I've long had an inside informant.

Samples, I presume, can be mere excerpts with sufficient letters for duplicated comparisons. I presume no names are needed, neither salutations nor closings.

I am telling no other entities of this. The chances are that it is black humor.